

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PARIS 05200 180240Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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R 171541Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6336  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON  
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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMEMBASSY VIENNA  
USMISSION USUN

S E C R E T PARIS 05200

EXDIS

VIENNA FOR USIAEA

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: MNUC PARM SF FR US  
SUBJ: US-FRENCH DISCUSSIONS ON SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR  
PROBLEM

REF: (A) PARIS 02080; (B) STATE 9389

1. SUMMARY: ON FEB 15 DURING AMBASSADOR GERARD SMITH'S VISIT TO PARIS, DISCUSSIONS WITH MFA NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION ADVISOR ANDRE JACOMET AND MFA NUCLEAR AFFAIRS DIRECTOR PHILIPPE LOUET BRIEFLY REVIEWED STATUS OF DISCUSSION ON CERTAIN NUCLEAR MATTERS BETWEEN THE US AND SOUTH AFRICA AND BETWEEN FRANCE AND SOUTH AFRICA. SMITH REVIEWED SUBSTANCE CONTAINED REF B AND ADVISED THAT A US TECHNICAL TEAM WOULD GO TO SOUTH AFRICA ON FEB 17-18. LOUET REPORTED THAT ESCOM HAD ASKED COMURHEX IF IT WOULD CONTRACT FOR CONVERSION OF SOUTH AFRICAN URANIUM TO UF-6. THE FRENCH MFA INSTRUCTED  
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COMURHEX THAT IT COULD AGREE TO SUCH A CONTRACT ON THE CONDITION THAT THE ENRICHMENT OF THE UF-6 WAS DONE IN THE US; THE MFA WOULD NOT AGREE TO ENRICHMENT IN FRANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. ANDRE JACOMET AND PHILIPPE LOUET DISCUSSED WITH AMBASSADOR SMITH, ROBERT KELLEY AND EMBOFF THE CURRENT

SITUATION REGARDING DISCUSSIONS OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS WITH SOUTH AFRICA ON NUCLEAR MATERIAL. THE PROGRAM OUTLINED IN THE DEPARTMENT'S CABLE (REF B) WAS REVIEWED WITH THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT A US TEAM WOULD BE ARRIVING IN SOUTH AFRICA FEB 17 OR 18 FOR ONE WEEK TO UNDERTAKE THE TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICIALS. IT IS FORESEEN THAT THE TEAM WOULD TAKE AN ADDITIONAL THREE WEEKS ON RETURN TO THE US TO COMPLETE TECHNICAL PAPERS ON THE US PROPOSALS. JACOMET AND LOUET INDICATED THAT FRANCE IS PREPARED TO COOPERATE WITH THE US IN REVIEWING THOSE PAPERS.

3. LOUET REPORTED THAT ESCOM, THE SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR AUTHORITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KOEBERG PLANTS, HAD RECENTLY ASKED COMURHEX, A CEA SUBSIDIARY WITH FACILITIES AT PIERRELATTE FOR THE CONVERSION OF URANIUM TO UF-6, IF IT WOULD CONTRACT TO CONVERT SOUTH AFRICAN URANIUM TO UF-6. COMURHEX ASKED FOR AND RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE MFA TO THE EFFECT THAT COMURHEX COULD ACCEPT THE CONTRACT ON THE SPECIFIC PROVISION THAT ENRICHMENT OF THE UF-6 BE MADE IN THE USA. THE REASONS FOR THIS PROVISION, ACCORDING TO LOUET, ARE THAT THE GOF WOULD NOT THINK IT PROBABLE THAT THE MATERIAL WOULD BE ENRICHED IN SOUTH AFRICA; THAT THE MFA WAS FLATLY AGAINST ENRICHMENT OF THE MATERIAL IN FRANCE; AND THAT IT WAS UNDERSTOOD BY  
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COMURHEX THAT THE INTENT OF THE CONTRACT WAS TO FACILITATE URANIUM FROM SOUTH AFRICA BEING SHIPPED TO THE US AS UF-6 FOR ENRICHMENT. ACCORDING TO LOUET, FRANCE WILL NOT AGREE TO ENRICHING SOUTH AFRICAN URANIUM IN FRANCE AS DOING SO WOULD BASICALLY UNDERCUT USG OBJECTIVES; FRANCE IN ANY EVENT WOULD ACCEPT NOTHING LESS FOR PROVISIONS OF SUCH A CONTRACT THAN WOULD BE REQUIRED BY THE US. LOUET ALSO NOTED THAT THE GOF HAD TAKEN A SIMILAR POSITION WITH REGARD TO A REQUEST FROM BRAZIL REGARDING ENRICHMENT OF URANIUM FOR A RESEARCH REACTOR IN THAT COUNTRY.

4. FOR VIENNA: PLEASE PASS THIS CABLE TO AMBASSADOR SMITH AS IT WAS PREPARED AFTER HE LEFT PARIS.  
MYERSON

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Draft Date:** 17 feb 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**TAGS:** MNUC, PARM, SF, FR, US  
**To:** STATE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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